United Nations A/HRC/26/NGO/21

General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 June 2014

English only

Human Rights Council
Twenty-sixth session
Agenda item 4
Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by the Women's Human Rights International Association, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[25 May 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.14-04489 (E)
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Attack by prison guards on defenceless political prisoners in Evin Prison in Tehran

On Thursday, April 17, prison guards raided and severely assaulted prisoners in Section 350 of Evin Prison where political prisoners are held. The prisoners that witnessed the raid state that those who were suspected of having connections with the PMOI were beaten "with the intent to kill".

According to Amnesty International *"Reports of prison guards raiding Section 350 of Tehran's Evin Prison, where many political prisoners are held, have emerged raising fears about the safety of prisoners. The unrest appears to have resulted in prisoners sustaining injuries, including broken ribs. It has been reported that at least 32 individuals from Section 350 have been transferred to solitary confinement in Section 240 of the prison. According to media reports on the morning of 17 April Ministry of Intelligence officials, along with about 100 guards dressed in riot gear reportedly entered Section 350 of Evin Prison, possibly to conduct a search..."*

We have received information that a number of the prisoners were severely wounded and suffered haemorrhages and fractures. Amongst them Gholamreza Khossravi Savadjani, Assadollah Hadi, Javad Fouladvand and Assadollah Assadi are in critical condition. Assadollah Hadi who recently had open-heart surgery, is in a serious condition. The guards also destroyed all prisoners' belongings and took with them their handwritten documents.

Independent UN Rapporteurs and in particular Mr. Ahmed Shaheed, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, have issued various statements in the past months demanding executions and suppression in Iran to be brought to an end.

On January 22, UN Special Rapporteurs on the situation of human rights in Iran Mr. Ahmed Shaheed and on arbitrary executions Mr. Christof Heyns announced:

"We are dismayed at the continued application of the death penalty with alarming frequency by the authorities, despite repeated calls for Iran to establish a moratorium on executions," the independent experts said, stressing *"the inherently cruel, inhuman and degrading nature of the death penalty.*

Ms. Pillay, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, expressed her concern about the situation of human rights in Iran in a press release on February 21 and stated:

"We are deeply concerned about the reported spike in executions in Iran since the beginning of this year. In just over seven weeks, at least 80 people have been executed. Some reliable sources indicate the figure could be as high as 95.

An escalation in executions, including of political prisoners and individuals belonging to ethnic minority groups, was notable in the second half of 2013. At least 500 people are known to have been executed in 2013, including 57 in public. According to some sources, the figure may be as high as 625."

Since the presidential election in Iran last June, the situation of human rights has deteriorated. Pledges for freedom of expression and respect for human rights have failed. Only a firm policy against the Iranian government can help the Iranian people who are suffering from oppression.

We, the undersigned societies, are calling for a firm policy against the violation of human rights in Iran. We call on the European Union and the international community to make conditional any improvement and expansion of political and economic relations with this Government to the improvement of human rights in Iran. We condemn the raid on the defenceless prisoners in Evin Prison and urge the High Commissioner for Human Rights Ms. Navi Pillay and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran Mr. Ahmed Shaheed to condemn this act.